

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A body armor system for protecting a user from penetration, comprising:
  - a front protective section for overlying the chest region of the user;
  - a rear protective section for overlying the back of the user;
  - ~~a pair of~~ a flexible right shoulder strap and a flexible left shoulder straps fastened to right and left shoulder regions, respectively, of the rear section, wherein the straps extend over the right and left shoulders of the user for attachment to corresponding right and left portions of the front section;
  - an outershell, which outershell includes a shoulder area;
  - wherein the shoulder straps are at least partially hidden within the outershell shoulder area, wherein the shoulder straps include adjustability within the outershell shoulder area, and wherein each of the shoulder straps is indirectly attached to a front ballistic panel by stitching through the front ballistic panel and at least one suspension tab at the right shoulder region of the front ballistic panel and at least one suspension tab at the left shoulder region of the front ballistic panel ~~the shoulder strap, the right shoulder straps being removably attached to the at least one suspension tab at the right shoulder region of the front ballistic panel and the left shoulder straps being removably attached to the at least one suspension tab at the left shoulder region of the front ballistic panel;~~ and
  - wherein a stabilizer tab is directly sewn to the ballistic panel ~~so as~~ to stabilize the ballistic panel against the user's body.

2. (Previously Amended) The body armor system of claim 1, further comprising:  
a hidden zipper in the front protective section where the ballistic panel is inserted.
3. (Previously Amended) The body armor system of claim 1, further comprising:  
a slit in a bottom of the front protective section where the ballistic panel is inserted.
4. (Previously Amended) The body armor system of claim 1, further comprising:  
a cummer band attached to an inside of the outershell to provide additional security to the rear section.
5. (Previously Amended) The body armor system of claim 1, further comprising:  
the front protective section having substantially no seams or attachment points.
6. (New) The body armor system of claim 1 wherein the suspension tabs are one-half of a hook and loop fastener and the shoulder straps further comprise a second-half of the hook and loop fastener.
7. (New) The body armor system of claim 1 wherein the pair of flexible right and left shoulder straps are indirectly attached to a rear ballistic panel in the rear protective section by stitching through the rear ballistic panel and at least one suspension tab at the right shoulder region of the rear ballistic panel and at least one suspension tab at the left shoulder region of the rear ballistic panel, the right shoulder straps being removably attached to the at least one

suspension tab at the right shoulder region of the rear ballistic panel and the left shoulder straps being removably attached to the at least one suspension tab at the left shoulder region of the rear ballistic panel.

8. (New) A body armor system comprising:

a front ballistic panel disposed in a front outershell, the front ballistic panel having a front left shoulder area and a front right shoulder area;

a rear ballistic panel disposed in a rear outershell, the rear ballistic panel having a rear left shoulder area and a rear right shoulder area;

at least one suspension tab directly attached to each of the front left shoulder area and front right shoulder area of the front ballistic panel;

a left shoulder strap attached to the rear left shoulder area of the rear ballistic panel and to the at least one suspension tab at the left front shoulder area of the front ballistic panel; and

a right shoulder strap attached to the rear right shoulder area of the rear ballistic panel and to the at least one suspension tab at the right front shoulder area of the front ballistic panel;

wherein the left shoulder strap attaches to the at least one suspension tab at the left front shoulder area of the front ballistic panel and the right shoulder strap attaches to the at least one suspension tab at the right front shoulder area of the front ballistic panel within the front outershell.

9. (New) The body armor system of claim 8 further comprising:

at least one suspension tab directly attached to each of the rear left shoulder area and rear right shoulder area of the rear ballistic panel;

wherein the left shoulder strap is attached to the rear left shoulder area of the rear ballistic panel by the suspension tab at the rear left shoulder area; and

the right shoulder strap is attached to the rear right shoulder area of the rear ballistic panel by the suspension tab at the rear right shoulder area, wherein the left shoulder strap attaches to the at least one suspension tab at the left rear shoulder area of the rear ballistic panel and the right shoulder strap attaches to the at least one suspension tab at the right rear shoulder area of the rear ballistic panel within the rear outershell.

10. (New) The body armor system of claim 8 further comprising a stabilizer tab directly sewn to the front ballistic panel to maintain the front ballistic panel against a user's body.

11. (New) The body armor system of claim 8 wherein the at least one suspension tab is one-half of a hook and loop fastener and the shoulder straps further comprise a second-half of the hook and loop fastener.

12. (New) The body armor of claim 8 wherein the at least one suspension tab includes one-half of a removable fastener and the shoulder straps further comprise a second-half of the removable fastener.

13. (New) The body armor of claim 12 wherein the removable fastener is selected from the group consisting of a button, a snap, and a hook-and-loop fastener.